GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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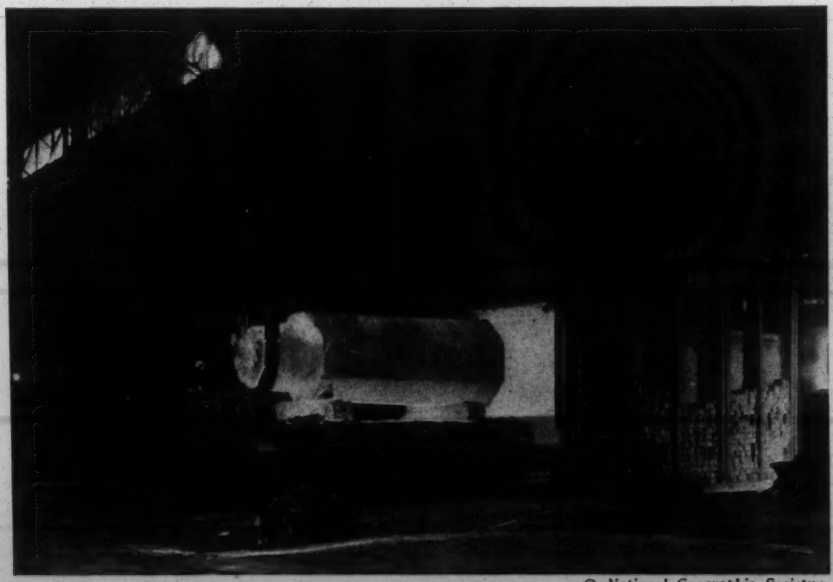

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THE SARRE SUPPLIES MUCH COAL FOR RUHR STEEL MILLS

(See Bulletin No. 3)

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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The Thames, Half for Trade and Half for Beauty

IN THE trade battle of the Thames River and the Mersey, the former has recently won five ocean liners. The desire of American tourists to see London caused the five trans-Atlantic steamers to shift their ports from Liverpool to London.

From London to its mouth the Thames has long been one of the world's greatest shipping centers. Quays line the shores and into both banks great basins and docks have been carved, where ships are endlessly loaded and unloaded. There is hardly a flag flown that cannot be seen at the masthead of some ship in a casual trip along the lower Thames.

While the world is chiefly concerned with the Thames from London to the sea, most Englishmen prefer to describe the beauties of the upper stretches of the river.

As rivers go, the Thames is small. It is only 161 miles long, with a drainage basin of about 5,000 square miles. The Danube is ten times, the Mississippi fifteen times, and the Rhine more than four times, as long. Beside the million and a quarter square miles drained by the Mississippi, or even the 75,000 square miles drained by the Rhine, the Thames basin seems almost tiny.

The "Newbridge" which is 700 Years Old

The birthplace of the Thames is only about 20 miles short of the sea on the western side of England, northeast of Bristol and Bath. A small spring formerly gushed up at what is known as "Thames Head" and trickled in a lazy little rill down a meadow. The outflow of this head spring is now piped away to furnish water for the Thames and Severn Canal. But springs abound in this region, and about half a mile down the meadow the infant Thames is to be seen in the shape of a little runnel fully two feet wide. Another half mile, and the Thames is a respectable brook. Soon its first mill appears, one of the many that dot its banks. By the time Oxford is reached, thanks to many little affluents, the stream is 150 feet wide, well deserving the name, "river."

The Thames flows through a country rich in historic associations and beautiful rural scenery. The oldest bridge across the stream, fifteen miles above Oxford, was built in the thirteenth century by monks of a near-by abbey. Paradoxically, it is named "Newbridge." Already some four centuries old, this structure was the scene of a skirmish in 1644 between Cromwell's forces and those of the Royalists. Not far below Newbridge is the only surviving rope-ferry on the Thames.

Thames Flows by a World-Famous University

At Oxford, still about sixty miles above London, one comes upon a little town known throughout the world because of the famous men who have come from there to shape the destinies of Great Britain. This has been England's great university town since the twelfth century. Traditions are cherished in Oxford, and so is architecture. Oxford's old but carefully preserved buildings give it a marked flavor of medieval times. The waters of the Thames, nearly doubled in size at Oxford by the inflow of the Cherwell, have long been the scene of intercollegiate rowing contests.

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OXFORD, WHERE DOMES AND TOWERS BESPEAK THE POWER OF THOUGHT

In the center of the picture is the Tom Quad, surrounded by the buildings of Christ Church College, with the cathedral to the right. In the distance is New College, one of the oldest buildings in Oxford. The dome of the Radcliffe Camera, which formerly housed the library, is a favorite place for a view of the maze of buildings which education has erected in England's most famous university town (See Bulletin No. 3).

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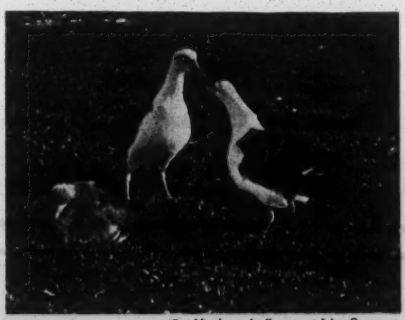
Dances of the Nations

WHETHER the current Charleston will be a permanent addition to the art of dancing, or whether it will jig out of the spotlight of popular fancy following fad steps of the past, discussion of it has revived interest in characteristic national and folk dances in many parts of the world.

America has no national dance in the true sense of the term. There is the Virginia Reel, which some individuals are trying to revive. In many of the more remote rural sections of the country the Virginia Reel does flourish, more or less, despite the growing scarcity of capable figure callers, but the boys and girls of most of the country today know little about it.

Star Dances of the Egyptians

In the case of some steps it is necessary only to name the dance, and its birthplace flashes to mind, so thoroughly have the country and the name of its most characteristic dance become linked. The jig, Ireland; the hula-hula, Hawaii; the tango, Argentina; the polka, Poland; the nautch, India; the minuet, Old France; the highland fling, Scotland. These are only a few samples of dances which furnish their own places and periods.



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EVEN BIRDS HAVE DANCES

"May I have this dance?" says one Albatross to another.

The most ancient dances are believed to be astronomical dances of the early Egyptians. The object of these dances was to inspire a feeling of harmony among the planets, and to so influence them that their effect on life might not be harmful. The Greeks took over the star dances from the Egyptians and found a place for them as the chorus, or background, of their tragedies. The Romans, as in other arts, produced few new dances. However, they developed the dances learned from the Egyptians and Greeks.

In the more primitive civilizations dancing and religion were linked together. "A savage does not preach his religion, he dances it," Livingstone wrote from Africa. For all important events in the lives of primitive peoples there are dances—for weddings, for funerals, for seed-time and for harvest, for war and for peace. To-day we find people praying in church for rain, or for the restoration of friends to health. Ancient man danced for these things.

Whirling Dervishes Whirl No More

One of the liveliest of the world's dances is the tarantella, the diversion of Naples. It is executed with tambourines. Formerly it was supposed to cure the bite of the tarantula, a large venomous spider. Another version of the origin

The Thames has a series of a score and a half of locks. Though a rather small stream, except near London, it carries a considerable traffic of barges. By use of the Thames and Severn Canal it is possible for barges to go through to the west coast of England.

From Oxford to London, and especially between Reading and Windsor, the Thames flows through some of the most beautiful country in England. This is to London what Long Island and Westchester are to New York. Mansions, palaces, country estates, parks, colleges and quaint little towns are strung along for mile after mile; while the river itself, here about 200 feet wide, adds, with its numerous bends and lazy flow, a beauty and dignity of its own. At Windsor, twenty-five miles above London, is the show palace of British royalty; and almost in sight of it down stream is the modest little meadow—Runnymede—where the limited status of the British monarchy was fixed for all time when the Barons forced King John to sign Magna Carta.

London Section Once Ugly, Now Improved

At ten or fifteen miles above London the Thames begins to be colored by the great city. Factories have crept into the little towns along the stream; the delightful rural spell which has held sway all along is broken. Tidewater comes to Teddington, eighteen miles above London Bridge, but the stream does not take on the appearance of an estuary until the muddy banks are reached at the upper edge of London.

Old London Bridge, because of its narrow arches and wide piers, was almost a dam. It retarded the flow of the tide and made the river at London in old days an ugly thing. The present London Bridge and the dozen or more others do not obstruct the flow badly so the river is much cleaner. The appearance of the Thames in the city, too, has been greatly improved in recent decades by the building of extensive quays. These have replaced the mud banks that were exposed when the tide was low.

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CAMELS OF A NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY EXPEDITION AT A WATERING PLACE

R. C. Ching, the botanist with the expedition led by Dr. F. R. Wulsin, found a violet which traveled far to learn its proper scientific pigeon hole. The plant from far interior China is a new species (See Bulletin No. 4).

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The Sarre Coal Field, an Oddity in Government

THE SARRE has a new president.

The Saar has a new president.

Just how you write it depends on whether you view the matter from over the French border to the south or over the German border on the north. The point is, that a new officer has taken the position which has been called "the most difficult administrative position in Europe." He governs a region containing one of the most valuable coal deposits on the European continent.

Compensation to France for Ruined Mines

The Sarre (Saar) Basin is a sort of prize, with a string to it, awarded to France. When German troops retreated from northern France they carefully destroyed the French coal mines. So thoroughly was the job done that in 1919 the French could get from their restored but damaged mines less than 20,000 tons of coal. In 1913 the same mines had yielded 28,000,000 tons.

The diplomats who framed the Peace Treaty set about compensating France as best they could for her ruined mines. They decided to replace them with German mines, for a time at least. The Sarre mines were the natural choice, because the territory in which they are located adjoined the new French frontier (formed by the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine). Existing railways and canals provided means for shipping their output into France. It was agreed that the mines should be handed over to the French government for 15 years, from 1920 to 1935. The German government had to pay any private owners of the mines for the loss of their property. Practically all the mines were the state property of Prussia and Bavaria, so this part of the plan was not as difficult as it might seem.

The decision to give the mines to France ran into trouble. The region could not be left under German control because French property rights could not be assured of protection. The Sarre's German population and the German property could not fairly be placed under French control. The League of Nations therefore set up a government which is something new under the sun. It is neither annexed territory, an independent state, nor a mandate.

Population Is Largely German

The region was carved out to include not only all mines under operation, but also the entire coal fields. The greater part of the territory lies north and east of the Sarre River but reaches out for a narrow strip on the opposite bank. To the south lies Lorraine, to the north the German Rhine provinces. On the west the Sarre territory does not quite reach Luxemburg; a narrow strip of the Rhine provinces parts them. The territory, shaped like an ellipse, is about 45 miles in greatest length and 30 miles in greatest breadth, and has an area of more than 750 square miles.

Over the Sarre and its 720,000 inhabitants the League of Nations set a Governing Commission to consist of one Frenchman, one citizen of the local region, and three non-French and non-German members, the president to be appointed by the League Council. The Commission is directly responsible to the League Council. Its acts are reviewed by that body. The region was included

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of the dance says that it is based on the theme of "la morra," a game consisting in guessing at the number of fingers suddenly held out by an opponent. Until recently visitors to Asia Minor were delighted and mystified with the gyrations of the famous Turkish whirling dervishes. Originally the movements had a religious meaning, but the art of the dervishes degenerated. Not long ago the new Turkish Republic prohibited the dance.

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"Delighted, I am sure"

Perhaps the only original contribution that England has made in the last four centuries is the sailor's hornpipe. The neighboring island of Ireland, however, boasts of the jig, the reel, and the hornpipe clog-and-shuffle dances. Britain's colonies offer colorful and interesting steps, most of them symbolic or religious, such as the devil dance of Upper Kashmir.

A Dance That Tests a Guest's Nerves

The imitative urge doubtless has played large parts in molding many of the more picturesque and strange steps of savage peoples. Of great interest to the student of animal life are such mimicking steps as the kangaroo hops of the Australian and the Tasmanian, the gorilla-like movements of a line of native dances in the heart of Africa, and the calf-herd tactics at a bushman's ball. In the frenzies of the American Indian's harvest and war dances may be seen the origins of some modern fad dances.

The close association of early dances with warfare is brought out in such survivals as the sword dances. The Scotch sword dance is the most graceful and least bloodthirsty of these. Chinese and Turkish sword dances, however, while wildly beautiful, are not wholly free from danger. Natives of the Fiji Islands have a war dance in which clubs are flourished. In East Africa the native tribes honor distinguished guests with a ceremonial dance, in which spears and other weapons are rushed up within an inch of the visitor's nose. It is a test of the honor guest's nerve, for if he moves or shows the least sign of fear or concern he falls in the respect of his well-meaning hosts.

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The Albatross dance invariably ends in crowning exultation

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A Newly Discovered Violet's Search for a Name

THE HEPATICA, or mayflower, introduces spring to much of the United States. Yet the violet is more the flower of springtime than any other, and is the favorite prize of a tramp in the woods at this season of the year. Therefore special interest gathers around a lonesome little dried violet which has earned distinction in the scientific world.

Gathered on an upland of interior China by the botanist of a National Geographic Society expedition, this violet traveled to America, and then took a ship to Germany in search of its botanical title. Finally, in Germany, it received official papers crediting it as an entirely new species.

Found by Chinese Botanist

The story of this little violet plant, dug from a hillside in the heart of Asia near the northeastern corner of Tibet, gives an insight into the painstaking care with which science works in testing new facts to be added to her store. The plant was collected in the summer of 1923 by R. C. Ching. He was a Chinese botanist attached to the staff of F. R. Wulsin who conducted the National Geographic Society's expedition in the Kansu Province of China. Carefully dried and packed, the specimen found its way several months later by coolie-back and mule-back to the Chinese coast. From there it was shipped to the United States National Museum in Washington.

Experts at the Museum found that they did not have sufficient data in regard to similar old-world plants to arrive at a decision on the classification of the little Chinese violet. Therefore, they repacked the violet and sent it across the Atlantic to a German botanist, Wilhelm Becker, who has specialized in Asiatic plants. After careful study Becker pronounced the plant a member of a new species. The species has been named *viola chingiana* in honor of the Chinese botanist who discovered it.

Viola chingiana has been presented to the world in the pages of the published Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington in a Latin description. The words and phrases do not invite inquiry. But behind them are hidden these plain facts: the plants are roundish-oblong with saw-tooth edges, and, like its cousins of America and Europe, *viola chingiana* loves best the moist, grassy slopes.

Four States Name Violet Favorite

The violet's popularity in America is shown by its selection in four States, Illinois, Rhode Island, Wisconsin and New Jersey, as the State flower. This record is equalled only by the wild rose, which has been chosen by Iowa, North Dakota, Georgia and New York. Illinois, Rhode Island and Wisconsin chose the violet by legislative action, but in New Jersey the school children named it their favorite, and their word stands.

Bulletin No. 4, April 19, 1926

FOR FURTHER READING

Teachers will find allied subject matter and illustrations for Bulletin No. 4 in the following National Geographic Magazine article: "The Road to Wang Ye Fu," by Frederick R. Wulsin, 29 illustrations, February, 1926, pp. 195-234. Also see "The Book of Wild Flowers," published by the National Geographic Society.

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in the French customs system, but free trade was granted with Germany until January, 1925.

The Sarre Is Near Lorraine Iron Mines

The Valley of the Sarre, or Saar, is fairly wide between Saarbrucken, near where it enters the territory, and Merzig, near where it flows into the Rhine Provinces. Some farming is carried on in the valley. Wine is the most noted of agricultural products. It is as an industrial and mining region, however, that the Sarre has come to be known to the world. Existence of iron mines in Lorraine nearby provide the chief material for steel production in a small area. The Sarre compares with the Birmingham, Alabama, steel district in the United States.

Coal mines now being worked are near the eastern end of the basin, especially in the small valley between Saarbrucken and Neunkirchen, ten miles to the northeast. In this district, too, are many of the industries of the Sarre; blast furnaces, machine shops, metal and chemical works, pottery kilns, and the like. Both mines and factories are strung less thickly down the valley and are found throughout the territory.

The Sarre basin has been politically a sort of twilight zone between France and Germany for centuries. At times it belonged to independent princes, at times to the old Empire, at times to France and at times to New Germany. Saarbrucken, which may be considered the center of the region, first went to France as a part of Lorraine in 1766. After Waterloo it was taken by the Allies and turned over to Prussia. The region in which Saarlouis is situated, fifteen miles down the valley, became French before 1681. In that year, Louis XIV founded the city of Saarlouis and had his famous military engineer, Vauban, fortify it. The fortifications were torn down in 1889.

The Population Will Vote in 1935

While France has an early territorial claim to the Sarre, Germany has a later territorial claim and an overwhelming claim on the basis of present population. It is this population which is supposed to vote in 1935 to choose whether the present semi-independent regime stay, or whether the territory is to be merged with Germany or with France. Should the Sarre return to Germany it is provided by the Peace Treaty that Germany shall rebuy the coal mines from France at a price to be fixed at that time by experts.

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Lower California Fisheries Which Have Been Closed to Japanese

THE ISLANDS off the Lower California coast, where Japanese fishing rights have been revoked recently by the Mexican Government, were explored in 1922 by a scientific expedition which studied the elephant seal herd and other marine and land life. The National Geographic Society took part in the expedition.

The scientists studied the fishery resources which have been developed by the Japanese until recently. The abalone, a sea mussel, is one of the principal marine crops harvested on this coast. Cedros Island, where the Japanese were to erect a cannery, is described in the following communication to the Society:

"Cedros Island lies close up to the Lower California coast, but is separated from the mainland by a deep channel. It gets its name (Spanish for cedar) from numerous scrub junipers found growing in some parts, and these are usually called 'cedars.'

"This island at no very distant date was connected with the mainland, as indicated by the fauna and flora as well as the geology. The northern portion contains metamorphic rocks which in one place are mineral-bearing. Here there has been a gold and copper mine, long since abandoned. Large quantities of machinery and 40 or more buildings stand in a dilapidated condition.

Where the Sun Heats Water to 145°

"Along the western side of the island are vast beds of kelp, where in the early days of California numbers of sea otters were obtained. The animals hunted crabs around the roots of the kelp and basked in the sun on beds of the fronds. One shipment from San Diego to Manila, in the early days of Spanish occupation, consisted of 9,000 sea-otter pelts. This cargo would be worth more than $10,000,000 at present market prices. Not all of the pelts were secured on Cedros Island, but it was a prolific producer.

"Near the southern end of the island an abalone packing company has brought the water of one of the springs from three miles inland down to the beach. The pipe is laid on top of the ground. On a July afternoon, when we were there, the water reached a temperature of 145° and could not be used for drinking or bathing. This illustrates the excessive heat of the island desert.

"Abalones abound around the rock-ribbed shores of Cedros, and an important industry is being developed. Some of the mollusks are dried for the Chinese market, while others are canned for American consumption. The abalone is known chiefly as the source of the pearly shells used in the manufacture of opera glasses and umbrella handles, but it is a mollusk which many epicures find delicious. It has become so popular as a food in California that it is gathered under stringent restrictions and exportation from the State is prohibited. Mexico has likewise adopted restrictions.

Sardines by the Cubic Mile

"The Mexican abalone diver uses standard equipment and stays down in 25 to 40 feet of water for four hours at a shift. He pries the shellfish loose from the rocks with a steel bar and sends them to the surface in large wire cages. The drying is done in the sun, after three intermittent steam cookings.

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MASSIVE WALLS OF LAVA, TWO THOUSAND FEET HIGH, BOUND THE ELEPHANT SEAL BEACH OF GUADALUPE ISLAND

The animals cannot be approached from the land side; if they were as well protected from the sea, there would be no reason to fear their extermination at the hands of oil-seekers (See Bulletin No. 5).

"The fisheries of this portion of Lower California waters are almost untouched, yet they are capable of very extensive development. Albacore, sea bass, yellow tail, bonito, dolphin, mackerel, jewfish, and sardines exist in untold abundance. Of the last there was a zone completely around Cedros Island while the expedition was there. The numbers were so great that they could hardly be estimated except by some such unit as a cubic mile.

"Other fishes in inestimable numbers were preying upon them. The giants of all were the great jewfish, some of which weighed 400 pounds each. We found them acceptable sea food and equal to halibut or salmon of more northern waters.

Beautiful Creatures of the Pacific

"Some of the pelagic fishes, such as the skipjack, bonito, and mackerel, caught on a troll behind the vessel, rank among the most beautiful creatures of the sea; the rainbow colors of the bonito particularly cannot be excelled for beauty by any dweller of more tropical waters.

"In winter the spiny lobster is caught in abundance off the shores of Cedros and shipped to San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. The 'pots' or traps were in evidence at almost every landing we made. The supply in California has been greatly reduced through overfishing, and it is hoped that Mexican regulations will be made sufficiently stringent to furnish a constant supply from Lower California waters."

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NOT DEAD—MERELY ENJOYING A SIESTA ON THE BEACH

An elephant seal on Guadalupe Island which is a neighbor to Cedros Island off the Lower California coast. The elephant seals are now protected from destruction by law. The regulation was passed by the Mexican Government after a scientific investigation of the islands.